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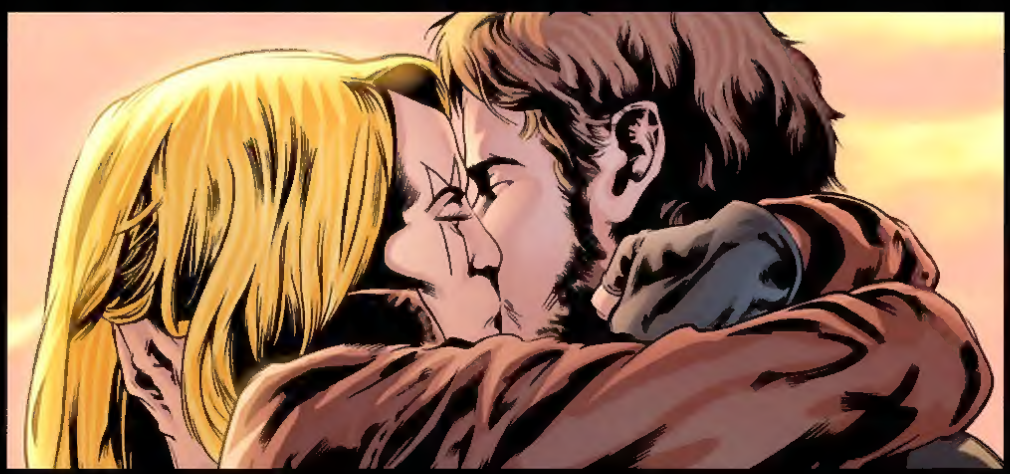
IN A SOCIETY WHERE MUTANTS AND FORMER MUTANTS ALIKE FEEL THREATENED BY THE WORLD AROUND THEM, THEY TURN TO THEIR FIRST, BEST LINE OF DEFENSE WHENEVER TROUBLE ARISES: X-FACTOR, THE PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY FOUNDED BY MADROX, THE MULTIPLE MAN.

X-FACTOR



ALL RIGHT, I KNOW YOU ALL LOVE THE PETER DAVID-WRITTEN RECAPS YOU USUALLY GET, BUT HE'S BUSY ENTERTAINING THE WORLD WITH HIS STORIES AND CAN'T MAKE IT THIS ISSUE, SO YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME, YOUR EDITOR, ONCE AGAIN.

SO, OKAY. A WHILE BACK, MADROX AND ANOTHER X-FACTOR MEMBER, SIRYN, WERE HAVING A BABY. WHEN THE BABY WAS BORN, MADROX REABSORBED HIM–TURNS OUT HE WASN'T ACTUALLY A BABY, BUT ONE OF MADROX'S DUPES. SIRYN WAS, UM, LET'S SAY UNHAPPY ABOUT THAT. SO WAS MADROX, TO BE FAIR–HE WENT OFF ON HIS OWN AND WAS ABOUT TO KILL HIMSELF WHEN HE WAS CONFRONTED BY A HOLOGRAM OF A TEENAGE LAYLA MILLER FROM 80 YEARS IN THE FUTURE. (LAYLA WAS A MEMBER OF X-FACTOR WHEN SHE WAS A PRECOCIOUS YOUNG GIRL, BUT WENT INTO THE FUTURE WITH MADROX. THAT'S WHERE THEY GOT THEIR "M" TATTOOS ON THEIR FACES. MADROX BASICALLY CAME BACK–LONG STORY–BUT LAYLA'S BEEN TRAPPED THERE FOR A WHILE.)

MADROX FOLLOWS HOLOGRAM-LAYLA INTO THE FUTURE AND MEETS UP WITH THE REAL LAYLA, AS WELL AS THE RESISTANCE FORCES OF THE SUMMERS REBELLION–A MUTANT-DRIVEN UPRISING AGAINST THE SENTINELS WHO RULE THIS FUTURE WITH (ALMOST LITERALLY) AN IRON FIST. THOSE RESISTERS INCLUDE THE ELDERLY SCOTT SUMMERS (FORMERLY CYCLOPS OF THE X-MEN) AND HIS DAUGHTER, RUBY. SOMETHING WEIRD IS GOING ON IN THE FUTURE–PEOPLE HAVE SEEMINGLY BEEN BLINKING IN AND OUT OF EXISTENCE. SEE? WEIRD, RIGHT?

ANYWAY, BACK IN THE PRESENT, SOME OF X-FACTOR–SIRYN, LONGSHOT, MONET, AND DARWIN–ARE SERVING AS BODYGUARDS TO LENORE, A DEPOWERED MUTANT. LENORE'S MOTHER ATTACKS HER DAUGHTER, AND WINDS UP IN THE HOSPITAL. MONET–A TELEPATH–REACHES INTO LENORE'S MOTHER'S MIND–AND SUDDENLY ATTACKS LONGSHOT, HER EYES GLOWING (NO, SERIOUSLY, YOU JUST FORGOT THE GLOWING PART) WHILE SHE SAYS, "CORTEX."

AND, OH YEAH, IN THE FUTURE, MADROX AND LAYLA KISS.

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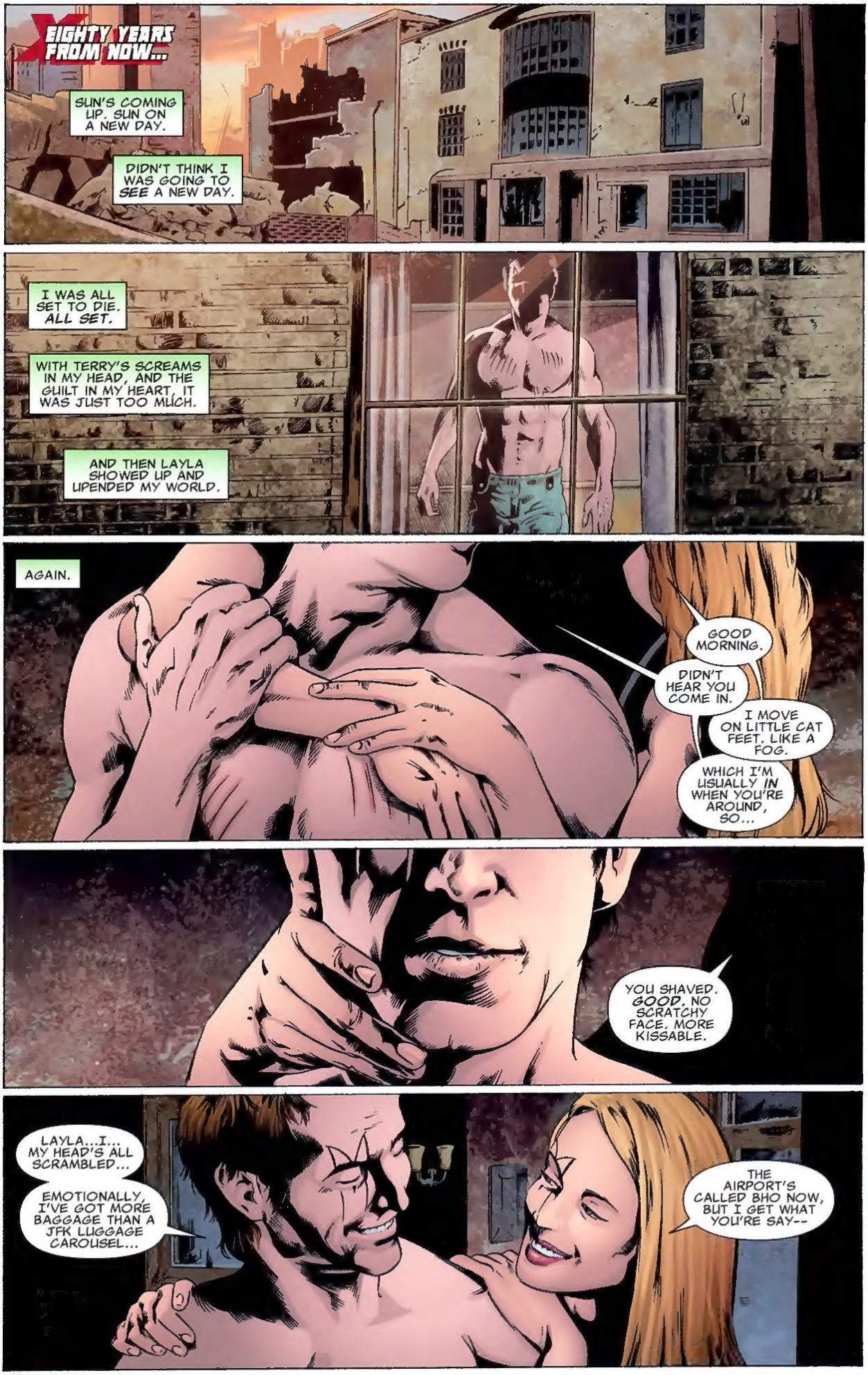
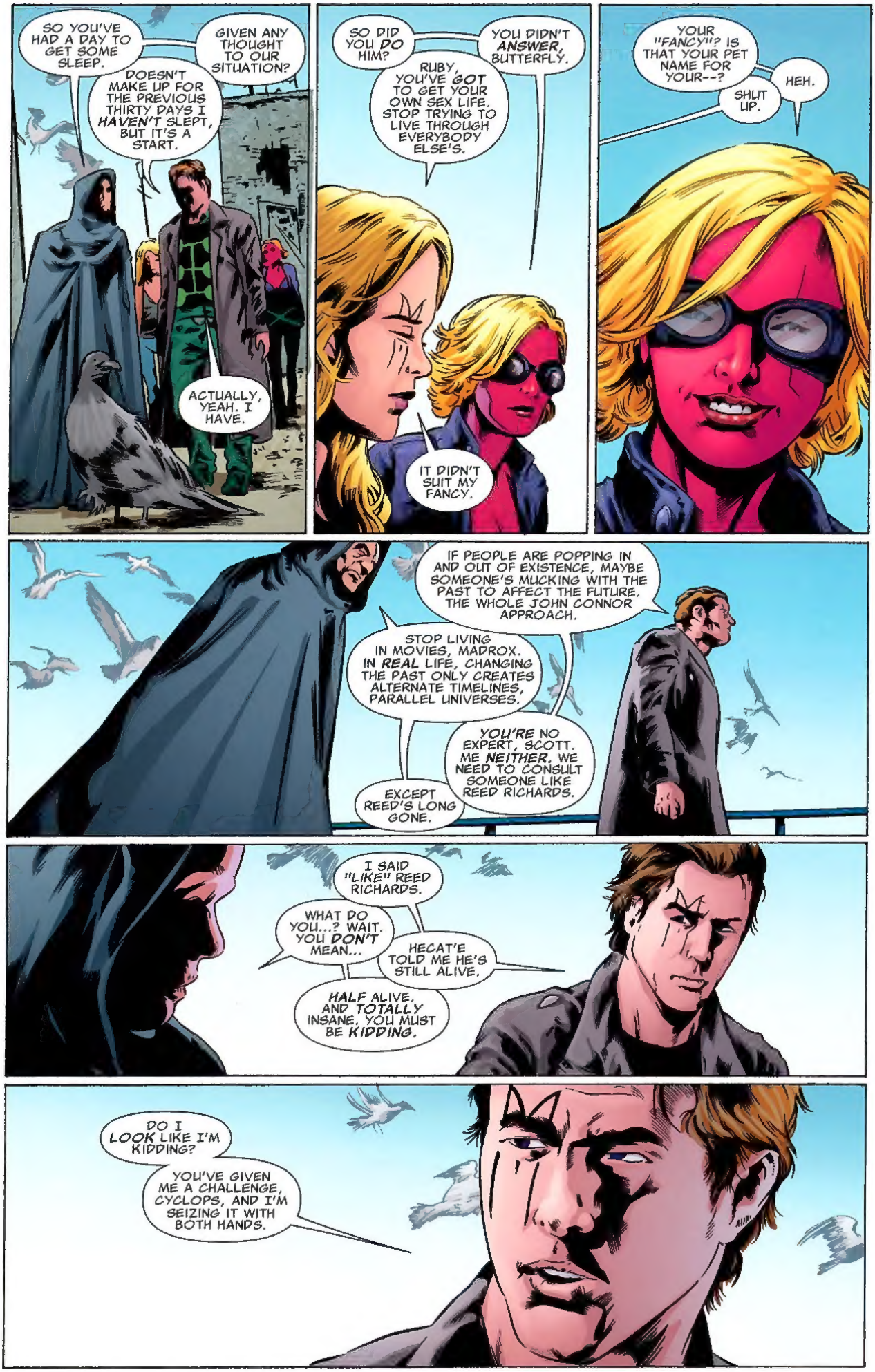

EIGHTY YEARS FROM NOW...
SUN'S COMING UP. SUN ON A NEW DAY.
DIDN'T THINK I WAS GOING TO SEE A NEW DAY.
I WAS ALL SET TO DIE. ALL SET.
WITH TERRY'S SCREAMS IN MY HEAD, AND THE GUILT IN MY HEART, IT WAS JUST TOO MUCH.
AND THEN LAYLA SHOWED UP AND UPENDED MY WORLD.
AGAIN.
GOOD MORNING.
DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN.
I MOVE ON LITTLE CAT FEET. LIKE A FOG.
WHICH I'M USUALLY IN WHEN YOU'RE AROUND, SO...
YOU SHAVED. GOOD. NO SCRATCHY FACE. MORE KISSABLE.
LAYLA...I... MY HEAD'S ALL SCRAMBLED...
EMOTIONALLY, I'VE GOT MORE BAGGAGE THAN A JFK LUGGAGE CAROUSEL...
THE AIRPORT'S CALLED BHO NOW, BUT I GET WHAT YOU'RE SAY--

OH GOD.
FROM SIRYN?
YEAH. WHEN SHE TRIED TO CLAW THE--
--THE BABY FROM THE--
SEAN. SHE NAMED HIM SEAN, SHE--
GREAT.
IT'S OKAY.
IT'S NOT OKAY. THERE'S NO CRYING IN NOIR.
LIFE ISN'T NOIR.
YEAH, WELL...IT SHOULD BE.
AND SOME SCARS GO DEEPER THAN SKIN.
NO KIDDING.
THANK GOD SCOTT DIDN'T SEE THIS. OR RUBY.
YOU WISH.
Swell.

LAYLA ONCE BROKE DOWN AND CRIED LIKE A LITTLE GIRL AND THAT WORKED ON ME BECAUSE--WELL--SHE WAS A LITTLE GIRL AT THE TIME.
WHAT'S *YOUR* EXCUSE?
HEY, SCOTT. GREAT NEWS: IT'S SENIOR CITIZEN DAY AT RED LOBSTER. CHOW DOWN.
AH. *THERE'S* SOME OF THE OLD MADROX SPIRIT.
DID YOU GUYS WASH MY CLOTHES WHILE I WAS ASLEEP...?
IT WAS SELF-DEFENSE. THEY SMELLED LIKE YOU'D BEEN WEARING THEM FOR A WEEK.
A MONTH, BUT WHO'S COUNTING?
EVEN ON YOUR **BEST** DAY, YOU WERE NEVER MR. HYGIENE.
I CAN'T GET OVER RUBY ACTING LIKE SHE KNOWS ME FROM THE "*OLD DAYS*" EXCEPT I ONLY MET HER YESTERDAY.
TIME PARADOXES GIVE ME THE TROTS.

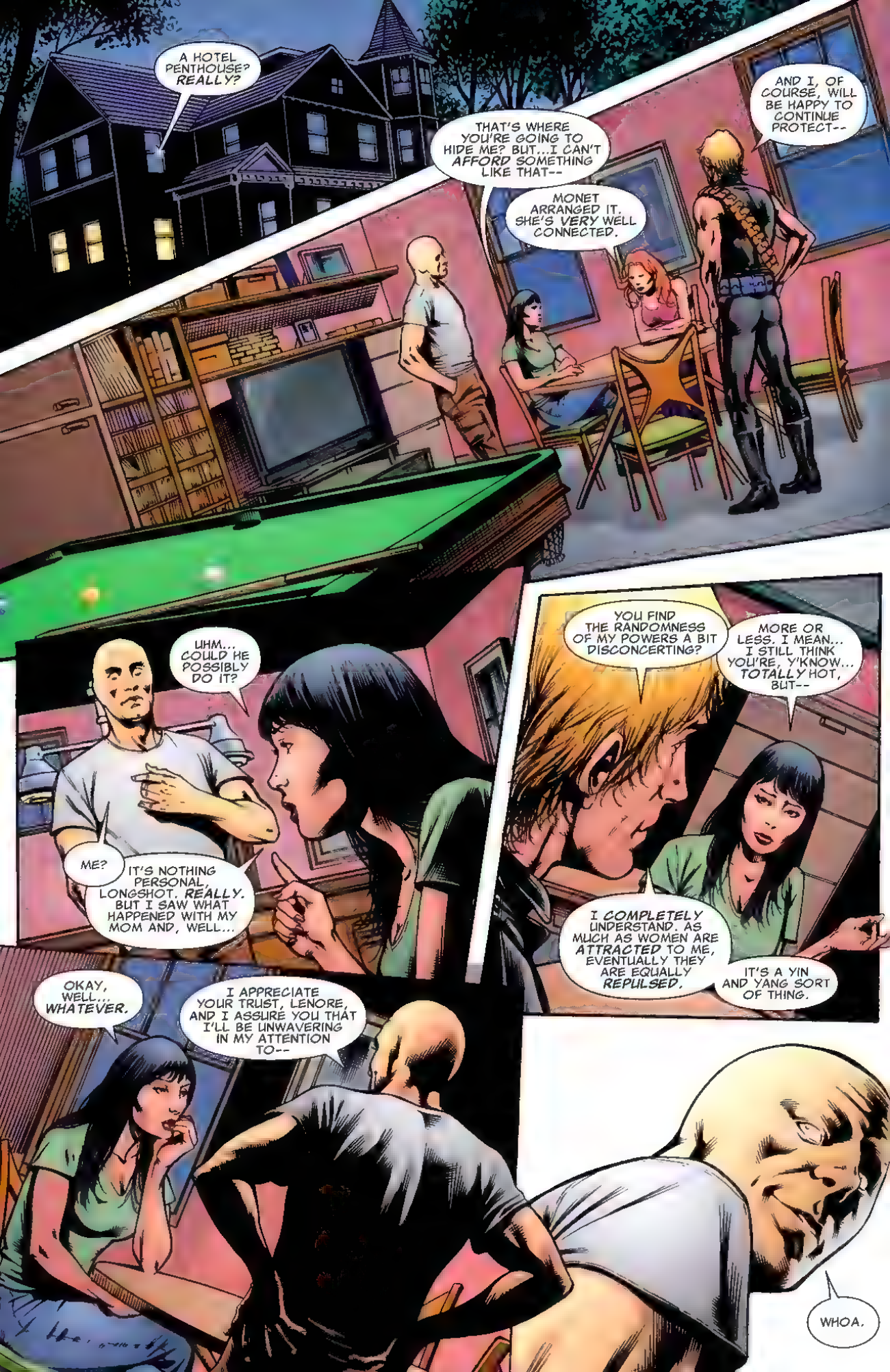

SO YOU'VE HAD A DAY TO GET SOME SLEEP.
GIVEN ANY THOUGHT TO OUR SITUATION?
DOESN'T MAKE UP FOR THE PREVIOUS THIRTY DAYS I HAVEN'T SLEPT, BUT IT'S A START.
ACTUALLY, YEAH, I HAVE.
SO DID YOU DO HIM?
YOU DIDN'T ANSWER, BUTTERFLY.
RUBY, YOU'VE GOT TO GET YOUR OWN SEX LIFE. STOP TRYING TO LIVE THROUGH EVERYBODY ELSE'S.
IT DIDN'T SUIT MY FANCY.
YOUR "FANCY"? IS THAT YOUR PET NAME FOR YOUR--?
HEH.
SHUT UP.
IF PEOPLE ARE POPPING IN AND OUT OF EXISTENCE, MAYBE SOMEONE'S MUCKING WITH THE PAST TO AFFECT THE FUTURE. THE WHOLE JOHN CONNOR APPROACH.
STOP LIVING IN MOVIES, MADROX. IN REAL LIFE, CHANGING THE PAST ONLY CREATES ALTERNATE TIMELINES, PARALLEL UNIVERSES.
YOU'RE NO EXPERT, SCOTT. ME NEITHER. WE NEED TO CONSULT SOMEONE LIKE REED RICHARDS.
EXCEPT REED'S LONG GONE.
I SAID "LIKE" REED RICHARDS.
WHAT DO YOU...? WAIT. YOU DON'T MEAN...
HECAT'E TOLD ME HE'S STILL ALIVE.
HALF ALIVE, AND TOTALLY INSANE. YOU MUST BE KIDDING.
DO I LOOK LIKE I'M KIDDING?
YOU'VE GIVEN ME A CHALLENGE, CYCLOPS, AND I'M SEIZING IT WITH BOTH HANDS.

X NOW.
MONET!
LET HIM GO!!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?!?
SHE'S TRYING TO KILL LONGSHOT! THAT'S ENOUGH WRONG FOR NOW!
DIRTY, SEXY
MONET

--GLOW IN HER EYES--
AAAAAHUK... SHE...SHE LET GO...
MONET?
--GLOW IN HER EYES?
WHAT GLOW? I DON'T SEE ANY--
MONET? MONET, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT--?
YEAH. YEAH, IT'S OKAY.
I WAS WORRIED--
I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN.
IT WAS *VERY* SWEET.
LONGSHOT? ARE YOU OKAY?
I'LL LIVE. YOU'VE... *QUITE* A GRIP.
THANKS. I WORK OUT. EAT RIGHT. HAVE SUPER-STRENGTH.
MUST BE THE EATING RIGHT THING.

DOCTOR'S ON HIS WAY!
IT'S OKAY, LENORE. YOU CAN TELL THE DOCTOR EVERYTHING'S FINE.
IT *IS* FINE, ISN'T IT, MONET?
OH YES. *NO* PROBLEMS HERE.
IN FACT, I'LL GO *WITH* HER TO ASSURE THE DOCTOR I'M ALL RIGHT.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. *I'LL* GO WITH HER. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ATTACKERS.
YOU STAY HERE AND REST.
WHY, YOU--
ARE SO CONSIDERATE. *THANK* YOU, DARWIN.
NO PROBLEM.

SO WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?
I HIT SOME SORT OF...OF PSYCHIC FEEDBACK. A RESULT OF A MENTAL BARRIER IN HER SUBCONSCIOUS.
DID SHE GENERATE IT HERSELF?
NO. IT WAS FROM AN OUTSIDE SOURCE.
CAN YOU GET PAST IT? I DON'T WANT YOU TO RISK YOURSELF, BUT--
ACTUALLY, I ALREADY MANAGED TO BREAK THROUGH IT. THAT CAUSED THE FEEDBACK THAT MOMENTARILY THREW ME.
SO...WHAT DID YOU FIND? OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING WAS CONTROLLING HER.
IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY. IT SENSED MY PRESENCE, REALIZED I WAS THE STRONGER, AND DECAMPED. SHE SHOULD AWAKEN BEFORE TOO LONG.
I COULD SWEAR YOU SAID SOMETHING. A WORD.
IT WAS HARD TO MAKE OUT, WHAT WITH MY BLOOD POUNDING IN MY EARS.
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN... CODEX? COTEX?
WELL, A CODEX IS A KIND OF BOOK. AND KOTEX IS--
UHM...NEVER MIND. WE'LL GO WITH CODEX. MONET, DO YOU RECALL ANYTHING ABOUT--?
NO. NOTHING LEFT FROM WHEN I PUSHED IT OUT OF MY HEAD. LOOK, ABOUT LENORE...
HER APARTMENT ISN'T SAFE. SHE'S A TARGET THERE.
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?


A HOTEL PENTHOUSE? REALLY?
THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO HIDE ME? BUT...I CAN'T AFFORD SOMETHING LIKE THAT--
MONET ARRANGED IT. SHE'S VERY WELL CONNECTED.
AND I, OF COURSE, WILL BE HAPPY TO CONTINUE PROTECT--
UHM... COULD HE POSSIBLY DO IT?
ME?
IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL, LONGSHOT. REALLY. BUT I SAW WHAT HAPPENED WITH MY MOM AND, WELL...
YOU FIND THE RANDOMNESS OF MY POWERS A BIT DISCONCERTING?
MORE OR LESS. I MEAN... I STILL THINK YOU'RE, Y'KNOW... TOTALLY HOT, BUT--
I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND. AS MUCH AS WOMEN ARE ATTRACTED TO ME, EVENTUALLY THEY ARE EQUALLY REPULSED.
IT'S A YIN AND YANG SORT OF THING.
OKAY, WELL... WHATEVER.
I APPRECIATE YOUR TRUST, LENORE, AND I ASSURE YOU THAT I'LL BE UNWAVERING IN MY ATTENTION TO--
WHOA.

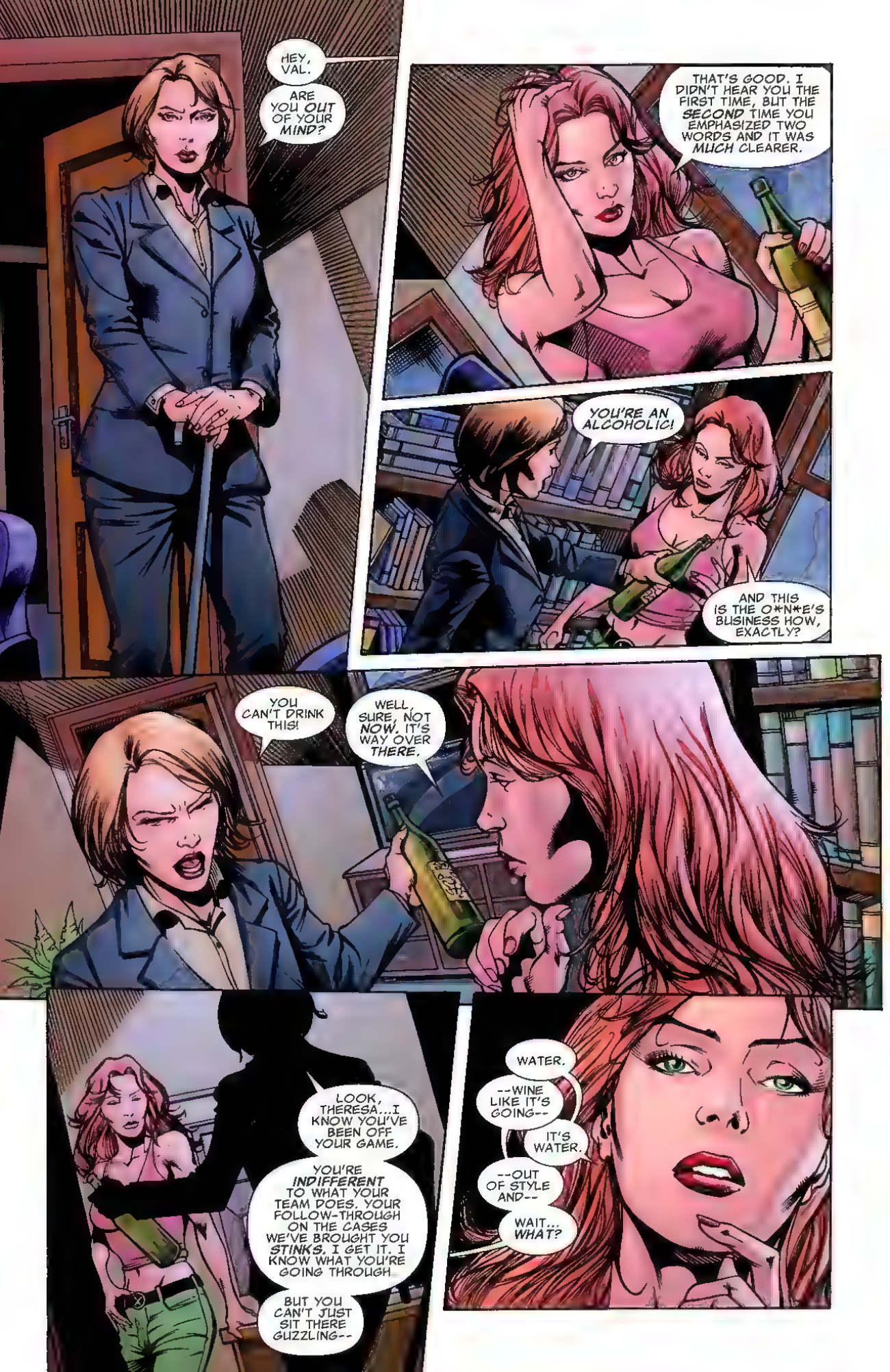
SO. WE READY TO GO?

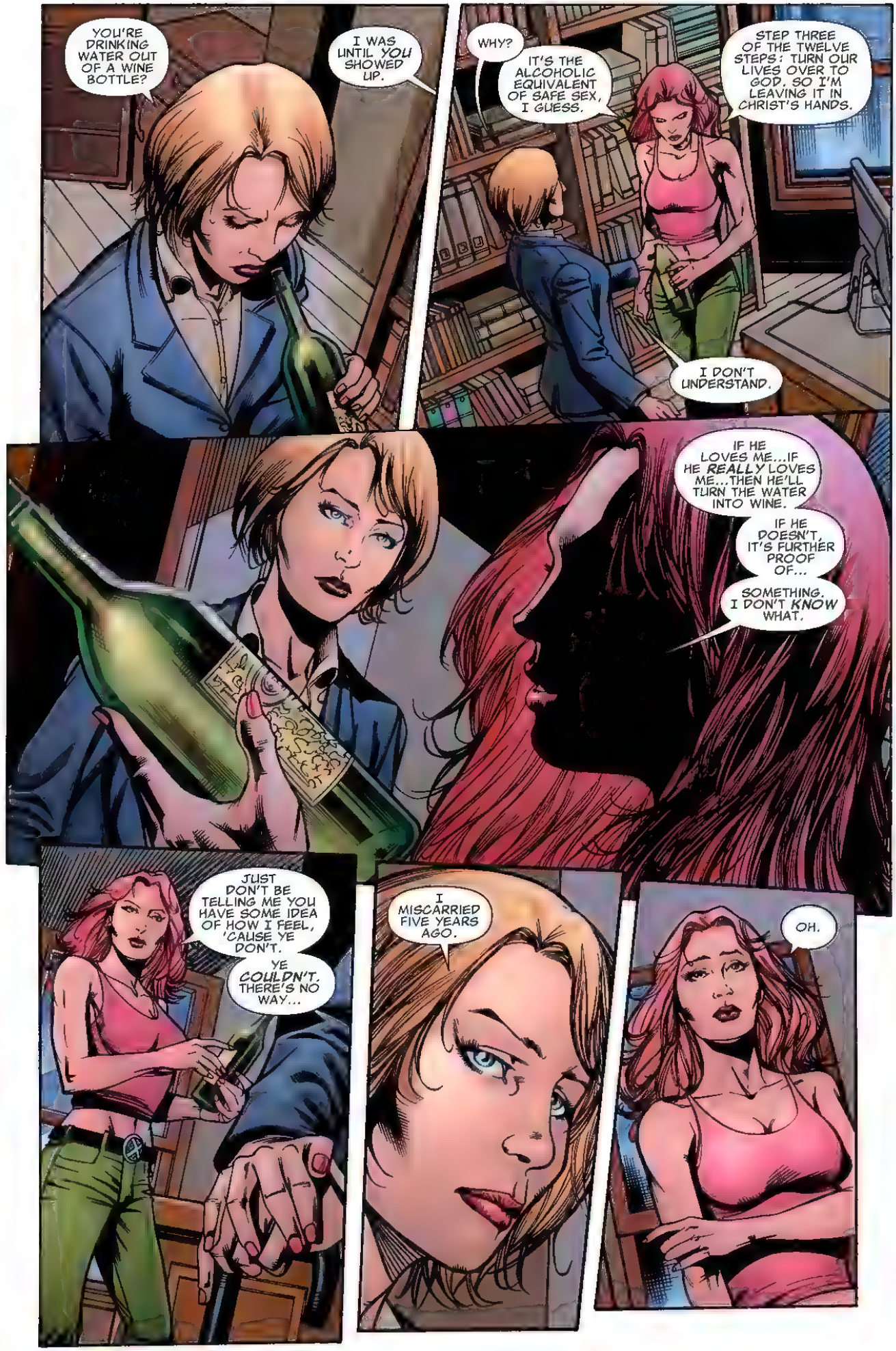
YOU'RE... COMING WITH ME?
WITH MUSS? I MEAN US? I MEAN...
YOU'RE COMING ALONG?
OF COURSE. YOU'RE FINE FOR DEFENSE, BUT YOU NEED SOMEONE ON OFFENSE.
IF THAT'S OKAY WITH YOU.
YES, OF COURSE. YOU'RE TOTALLY OFFENSIVE.
OH GOD.
YOU'RE SO CUTE WHEN YOU'RE SCREWING UP A COMPLIMENT.
TH-THANK YOU.
ALLONS-Y!

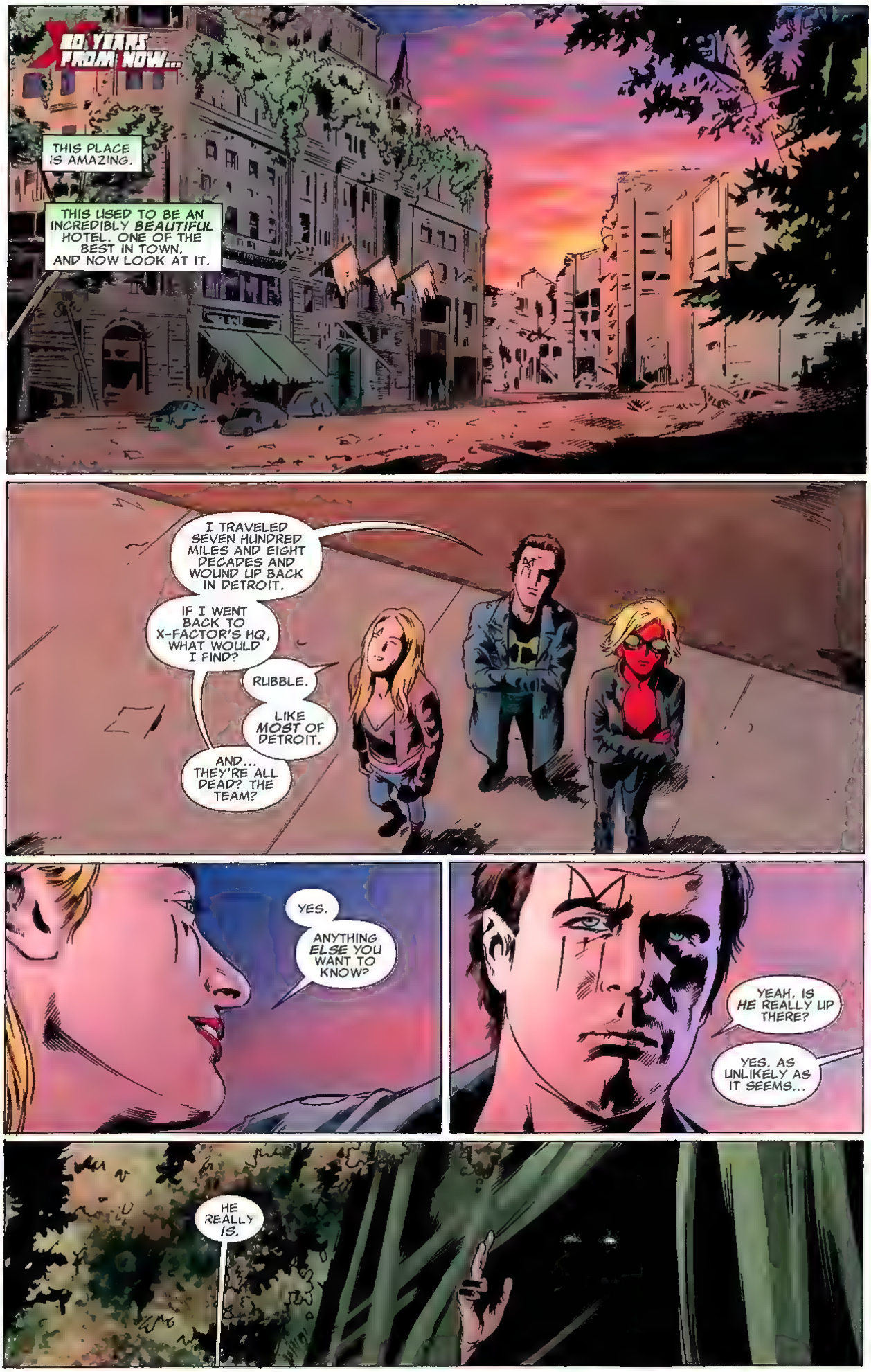
"THIS PLACE IS AMAZING!"
DO I EVEN WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT GOES FOR PER NIGHT?
IF I TOLD YOU, YOUR HEAD WOULD EXPLODE, AND WE'D BE OUT A CLIENT.

HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO STAY HERE? I MEAN, YOU HAVE ENOUGH LUGGAGE FOR, I DUNNO...
A WEEK. I PACKED LIGHT.
NOT THAT THE LIFE I WAS LIVING WAS ANY GREAT SHAKES, BUT...
BUT I CAN'T LIVE MY WHOLE LIFE HERE.
WE WON'T BE HERE INDEFINITELY. SIRYN AND LONGSHOT ARE CHASING DOWN LEADS. CHECKING WITH OTHER X-TEAMS, PLUS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND EVEN STREET SOURCES...
SEEING IF THIS "CODEX" THING GETS ANY HITS, OR IF ANY OTHER FORMER MUTANTS HAVE BEEN ATTACKED.
MEANTIME...
WE CAN RELAX. WHAT DO YOU SAY?
BEATS THE HELL OUT OF A MINIBAR.

ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?


HEY, VAL.
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?
THAT'S GOOD. I DIDN'T HEAR YOU THE FIRST TIME, BUT THE SECOND TIME YOU EMPHASIZED TWO WORDS AND IT WAS MUCH CLEARER.
YOU'RE AN ALCOHOLIC!
AND THIS IS THE O*N*E'S BUSINESS HOW, EXACTLY?
YOU CAN'T DRINK THIS!
WELL, SURE, NOT NOW. IT'S WAY OVER THERE.
LOOK, THERESA...I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN OFF YOUR GAME.
YOU'RE INDIFFERENT TO WHAT YOUR TEAM DOES. YOUR FOLLOW-THROUGH ON THE CASES WE'VE BROUGHT YOU STINKS. I GET IT. I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH.
BUT YOU CAN'T JUST SIT THERE GUZZLING--
WATER.
--WINE LIKE IT'S GOING--
IT'S WATER.
--OUT OF STYLE AND--
WAIT... WHAT?


YOU'RE DRINKING WATER OUT OF A WINE BOTTLE?
I WAS UNTIL YOU SHOWED UP.
WHY?
IT'S THE ALCOHOLIC EQUIVALENT OF SAFE SEX, I GUESS.
STEP THREE OF THE TWELVE STEPS: TURN OUR LIVES OVER TO GOD. SO I'M LEAVING IT IN CHRIST'S HANDS.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
IF HE LOVES ME...IF HE REALLY LOVES ME...THEN HE'LL TURN THE WATER INTO WINE.
IF HE DOESN'T, IT'S FURTHER PROOF OF...
SOMETHING. I DON'T KNOW WHAT.
JUST DON'T BE TELLING ME YOU HAVE SOME IDEA OF HOW I FEEL, 'CAUSE YE DON'T.
YE COULDN'T. THERE'S NO WAY...
I MISCARRIED FIVE YEARS AGO.
OH.


10 YEARS FROM NOW...
THIS PLACE IS AMAZING.
THIS USED TO BE AN INCREDIBLY BEAUTIFUL HOTEL. ONE OF THE BEST IN TOWN, AND NOW LOOK AT IT.
I TRAVELED SEVEN HUNDRED MILES AND EIGHT DECADES AND WOUND UP BACK IN DETROIT.
IF I WENT BACK TO X-FACTOR'S HQ, WHAT WOULD I FIND?
RUBBLE.
LIKE MOST OF DETROIT.
AND... THEY'RE ALL DEAD? THE TEAM?
YES.
ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO KNOW?
YEAH, IS HE REALLY UP THERE?
YES. AS UNLIKELY AS IT SEEMS...
HE REALLY IS.

NOW...
AND FINALLY, JUST TO GET HIM OFF ME, I SAY, "BRAD, YOU KNOW WHO YOU SHOULD MEET?"
AND I DRAG HIM OVER TO ANGELINA AND I SAY, "BRAD, ANGIE, ANGIE, BRAD. WHY DON'T YOU TALK ABOUT MAKING A MOVIE TOGETHER?"
AND I HEAD BACK INTO THE PARTY, LEAVE THEM ON THE PATIO. NEXT TIME I SAW THEM WAS AT THE WEDDING.
MONET, SHOULD YOU *REALLY* BE DRINKING THIS MUCH? WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE PROTECTING LENORE...
YOU HAVE... THE MOST *INCREDIBLE* LIFE, MS. ST. CROIX.
IT HAS ITS MOMENTS
SHE'S PERFECTLY SAFE. AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SHOULD *I* BE DRINKING THIS MUCH? YOU'RE DRINKING AS MUCH AS I AM. *MORE.*
TRUE ENOUGH.
BUT SINCE EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL IS BASICALLY HARMFUL...
...MY METABOLISM EVOLVES TO PROCESS IT *FASTER.*
I DON'T *GET* DRUNK.
THAT'S... *INTERESTING.*

ZZZZZ
AND THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE INTERESTING. IT SEEMS WE HAVE SOME PRIVACY.
I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND...
I BELIEVE YOU DO, ARMANDO.
DO YOU THINK I'M BLIND? YOU THINK I HAVEN'T NOTICED HOW YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING AT ME?
I CAN HEAR YOUR HEART SPEEDING UP WHEN I WALK IN A ROOM.
YOU CAN?
YES. CAN YOU HEAR MINE?
UH... NO...
HOW ABOUT NOW?
It's clearer now, yeah...

MONET...YOU'VE CLEARLY HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK. THIS ISN'T RIGHT.
NO. I'VE HAD JUST ENOUGH.
RICTOR WANTS ME. LONGSHOT, TOO.
...WANT...
...YOU.
AND SO DO FIVE OF THE WORLD'S TOP TEN BACHELORS AS LISTED IN COSMO.
OH MY GOD.
BUT I...
I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU AND DO THINGS TO YOU YOU COULDN'T IMAGINE, AND THEN...

AND THEN... YOU FIGURE I FALL ASLEEP IN A BLISSFUL HAZE OF POST, Y'KNOW, WHATEVER.
AND THEN IT'S JUST YOU AND LENORE...
WHAT ARE YOU--?
AND THEN...
IT'S JUST YOU, THAT'S THE PLAN, RIGHT?
ARMANDO, I TOLD YOU--
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU! BECAUSE MUCH AS I MIGHT HOPE AND PRAY AND DREAM...
...IT WOULDN'T BE THIS EASY! YOU'RE NOT THIS EASY!
SO STOP MESSING WITH ME AND--
I WAS WILLING TO MAKE IT FUN FOR YOU, ARMANDO.
BUT NO. YOU HAD TO STARE INTO THE MOUTH OF THE PROVERBIAL GIFT HORSE.
ALL RIGHT, THEN.

HAVE IT YOUR WAY.
UNNNNFFF!
YOU WEREN'T ON CORTEX'S LIST.
BUT THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR MORE.
TO BE CONTINUED...

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JULY 2009
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DARK REIGN

IN THE NAME OF HIS FATHER

DARK WOLVERINE

DANIEL WAY • MARJORIE LIU • GIUSEPPE CAMUNCOLI

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70 YEARS MARVEL COMICS

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JUNE 2009

DIZZY & MEGAN
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Angels
X